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## **Sir Gawain and the Green Knight**

**Translated by  
Jessie L. Weston**

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1. The Preface, by Jessie L. Weston, 1898 00: 08:18
2. Section One 00: 21:53
3. Section Two 00: 29:11
4. Section Three 00: 35:11
5. Section Four 00: 25:31

This poem celebrates Christmas by exploring the mystery of Christ's mission on earth: his death, resurrection, and second coming as judge of all human souls. Sir Gawain is cast in the role of Everyman. His quest for the green knight leads him first through perilous adventures comparable to the life-threatening dangers confronting mortals in their earthly sojourn. Then, when his travels are at an end, he undergoes temptations representing the spiritual challenges that determine the fortunes of the soul after death. A couple footnotes may help in appreciating two details in the conclusion of the tale: First, Catholics believe that to perform the sacrament of Confession while intending to commit another sin deprives the priest's absolution of effect. Second, it was generally believed in the Middle Ages, and even today, that evil spirits cannot cross running water. This belief appears in "Tam Lin," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," and *The Lord of the Rings*.

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